

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 21855 031328Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 PM-04

H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

LAB-04 SIL-01 /079 W

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R 031108Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1591

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY DACCA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR TH

SUBJECT: THAI INTERNATIONAL STRIKE

REF: BANGKOK 21722

1. THE THAI AIRWAYS-THAI INTERNATIONAL STRIKE HAS EFFECTIVELY SHUT DOWN BANGKOK'S DON MUANG AIRPORT. AS OF MID-AFTERNOON LOCAL TIME, NO PLANE HAD LANDED SINCE EARLY MORNING, ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN SPECULATION THAT AIRLINES NOT DEPENDENT UPON THAI AIRWAYS FOR GROUND SERVICES WOULD TRY TO LAND. AT 11:30 AM A LUFTHANSA PLANE ATTEMPTED TO LAND BUT GAVE UP THE ATTEMPT WHEN IT WAS WARNED BY THE AIR CONTROL THAT
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 21855 031328Z

LANDING WOULD BE AT ITS OWN RISK. FUELING AREAS WERE BLOCKADED

BY THAI INTER RAMP BUSES.

2. BOTH AIR SIAM AND THAI INTERNATIONAL HAVE POWERFUL BACKERS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. THE THAI INTERNATIONAL SEVEN POINT DEMANDS PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNMENT ON AUGUST 2 WERE:

"-REMOVE PROMPTLY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER TAVICH KLINPRATHUM AND UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS GUN NAGAMATI FROM THEIR POSTS AT THE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY.

-INSTRUCT THE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY TO SCRAP ALL PLANS AFFECTING THE OPERATIONS OF TAC AND THAI.

-DESIGNATE TAC AS THE COUNTRY'S ONLY DOMESTIC COMMERCIAL AIRLINE AND THAI THE ONLY INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE.

-COMPLY URGENTLY WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET-APPOINTED COMMITTEE WHICH EXAMINED AIR SIAM'S FINANCIAL AND OPERATION MATTERS TO REVOKE AIR SIAM'S AVIATION BUSINESS LICENSE.

-ALLOW THAI TO CONSIDER TAKING OVER THE AVIATION OPERATIONS AND PERSONNEL OF AIR SIAM PROMPTLY.

-APPOINT A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE BEHAVIOUR OF PERSONS WHO HAVE TAKEN ILLEGITIMATE ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH EVERY ASPECT WHICH HAS CAUSED THE GOVERNMENT TO SUFFER IN COMMERCIAL AVIATION. TAKE DRASTIC ACTIONS AGAINST THE GUILTY PARTIES TO MAINTAIN THE SANCTITY OF LAWS AND TO DISPENSE WITH DISHONEST PERSONS IN THE OFFICIALDOM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DECLARED POLICY.

-PARDON ALL PERSONNEL OF STATE ENTERPRISES TAKING PART IN THIS PARTICULAR ACTION."

3. AIR SIAM HAS ATTEMPTED TO COUNTER THE THAI INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAY BY LOBBYING WITH FOREIGN AIRLINES TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT TO END THE STRIKE. ACCORDING TO THE AFTERNOON "BANGKOK WORLD" AIR SIAM EMPLOYEES PRESENTED A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BANGKO 21855 031328Z

FOUR POINT COUNTER DEMAND OF THEIR OWN TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER ON AUGUST 3. THE DEMANDS WERE:

"-IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL OF THOSE WHO INSTIGATED THE STRIKE.

-APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE QUESTIONABLE ACTION TAKEN BY SOME THAI INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYEES.

-AUDIT COUNCIL INVESTIGATION OF THAI INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTS.

-APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE PURCHASE
OF TWO DC-10S BY THAI INTERNATIONAL."

4. THE "STRIKE" IS PERHAPS UNIQUELY THAI IN THAT THE
STRIKING COMPANY IS GOVERNMENT OWNED, IT IS AIMED AT AMONG
OTHER THINGS THE OUSTER OF A CABINET MINISTER, AND IS DIRECTED
BY THE TOP MANAGEMENT OF THE COMPANY. IT WAS TIMED WELL FOR
THE TUESDAY CABINET SESSION. PRIME MINISTER SENI PRAMOT
BEFORE THE MEETING SAID THAT THE STRIKE ISSUE WOULD BE CONSIDERED
URGENTLY. THE "BANGKOK WORLD" REPORTED THAT THE CABINET
HAS APPOINTED A SPECIAL MEDIATION COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY DEPUTY
PRIME MINISTER PRAMAN ADIREKSAN. OFFICIALS OF THE TWO AIRLINES
WERE REPORTEDLY SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING CHAIRED BY PRAMAN
TO WORK OUT AN URGENT SOLUTION.

5. THE EMBASSY HAS EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN ABOUT INTERRUPTIONS
TO INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND DISRUPTION
OF AMERICAN AIRLINE COMPANIES TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, WHICH
INDICATED THAT IT INTENDED TO INTERVENE TO SEEK A RESUMPTION
OF GROUND SERVICE FOR FOREIGN CARRIERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, LABOR STRIKES, AIRPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGKO21855
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760298-1192
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760894/aaaadejx.tel
Line Count: 138
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BANGKOK 21722
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI INTERNATIONAL STRIKE
TAGS: EAIR, ELAB, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006